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Swiss banks, Jewish reps reach claims agreement

MARILYN HENRY
NEW YORK

THIRTY-FOUR years after the last effort to satisfy Jewish claims to funds in Swiss banks, the bankers and Jewish leaders signed an agreement yesterday setting up an independent "committee of eminent persons" to review the accounts again.

The seven-paragraph agreement calls for a committee of six members and four alternates, plus an unspecified chairman. The seats are divided between the Jews and the Swiss bankers. The Jewish delegates are Shevah Weiss, speaker of the Knesset; Avraham Burg, head of the Jewish Agency; and Ruben Baraja, head of the Jewish community of Argentina.

It is the committee's task to instruct an independent international auditor about the scope of its duties. In addition to concerning itself with Jewish accounts, the pact suggests that the Swiss government "will deal with the question of looted assets," an oblique reference to property expropriated by the Nazis and later deposited in the Swiss banks.

The agreement covers banks, but not other financial institutions, such as insurance companies or transfer agencies.

"We are grateful we could reach an agreement," said Georg Krayer, head of the Swiss Bankers Association, which will finance the committee's work. He said he awaited a "correction of these unhappy times."

Even in advance of the signing, the agreement had been widely heralded as a radical departure from traditional Swiss banking practice because it would allow an independent auditor what the pact called "unfettered access to all relevant files in banking institutions."

However, there was no breach in the vaunted Swiss secrecy laws because the commission has no direct access to the records, said Hans Baer, a member of the board of the bankers association. Instead, the committee will appoint an international auditing firm, already licensed in Switzerland and bound by Swiss rules, to conduct the review.

The main problem is [that people] did not have and still do not have the proper documentation," Krayer said at a news conference after the signing. "There is no secrecy and there has been no secrecy for any individual who is entitled to his money."

The bankers suggested that an ombudsman will be lenient in determining what constitutes acceptable documents. It was impossible to estimate how many people might file claims. In the 1962 settlement of accounts, some 7,000 claims for funds in the Swiss banks were turned down for lack of documentation.

The value of the Jewish assets remained the main sticking point yesterday. The bankers, while agreeing to the audit, maintain that there was \$32 million in Swiss banks that might belong to Holocaust victims.

"With the magic of compound interest," said an official of the World Jewish Congress, "\$32 million of 60 years would probably equal half a billion dollars."

However, the bankers said their estimates include the calculations for interest that might have accrued.

The signing took place in WJC President Edgar Bronfman's Seagrams building, three blocks from the New York office of the Union Bank of Switzerland, which was (Continued on Page 20)



A Palestinian vendor gathers his produce yesterday in the Hebron market as soldiers enforce the curfew imposed after Wednesday's stabbing of an elderly Jewish settler. (AP)

Report: Grapes of Wrath cost IDF NIS 200 million

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

OPERATION Grapes of Wrath, in which more than 20,000 artillery shells and more than 2,000 sorties were flown over Lebanon, reportedly cost the IDF at least NIS 200 million. Finance Minister Avraham Shohat said yesterday that he expects the IDF to cover this from the defense budget.

"I haven't yet received the figures from the IDF," Shohat told Israel Radio. "The defense establishment is dealing with it, and I hope very much it will be covered from their own budget."

The General Staff's financial adviser is reportedly gathering data

to put together the final bill for the 17-day operation.

A senior military official told Ha'aretz that the estimated cost of the operation was at least NIS 200m. In contrast, the final IDF figure for the cost of 1993's Operation Accountability was NIS 120m. The IDF covered the cost from its budget.

In an effort to cut costs, a security source said some of the 20,000 artillery rounds used were approaching their expiration dates. Using them up avoided the IDF's having to pay to have them destroyed.

Shekel drops 0.3% against dollar

Jerusalem Post Staff

THE shekel depreciated by another 0.3 percent against the dollar yesterday, falling to NIS 3.21 and completing a weekly decline of 1.3% and 4.25% over the past six weeks.

Analysts and traders attributed the drop to expectations that the next prime minister, whether Shimon Peres or Benjamin Netanyahu, will slash the budget to meet the Bank of Israel's recommended trade, budget, and current-account deficit targets.

The central bank has said that it would respond to a meaningful fiscal cut by cutting interest rates, which would increase the shekel's depreciation against foreign currencies.

These expectations are fueling demand for the dollar and other foreign currencies. The shekel fell against the Bank of Israel's basket of five major currencies to NIS 3.5798 from NIS 3.5672 on Wednesday.

Israeli horse racing under starters' orders soon

EVELYN GORDON

BETTING on horse races seems likely to become part of life here in the near future, as most members of the Knesset Finance Committee expressed support for the idea yesterday.

However, at the request of Dan Tichon (Likud) and Avraham Poraz (Meretz), the commit-

tee decided to postpone a final decision until after the elections.

The idea was strongly opposed by the Local Authorities Union. Its chairman, Adi Eldar, told the committee that in other countries which allow betting on horse

races, the events have become a magnet for organized crime, which fixes the races and sometimes even "fixes" horses and jockeys.

Furthermore, he said, there is a limited market for gambling here, most of which is currently filled by the lotteries run by Mifal Hapais. If horse racing were introduced, the money going to the

lotteries would decrease, he said, pointing out this would be a blow to the local authorities, since a large chunk of the revenue raised goes to municipal education, health, and welfare projects.

In contrast, Eldar said, the proposal submitted to the committee by the Council for the Regulation of Betting on Sports Events states that at least 60 percent of the revenue from bets on

(Continued on Page 20)

Peres holds debate today on Hebron pullback

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN and MICHAL YUDELMAN

PRIME Minister Shimon Peres is to meet with top generals and security officials this morning to hear their assessments regarding the timetable for redeployment from Hebron. The meeting, which was to have been held yesterday, takes place amid reports of conflicting views over the right time for withdrawal.

Peres is likely to hear two assessments in the meeting. Chief of General-Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak and General Security Service head Ami Ayalon both believe the IDF should pullout from Hebron because a delay could increase motivation by Moslem militants to carry out attacks, Channel 2 reported. They also reportedly believe a pullout would not incur any new risks and that the IDF can provide security after redeployment.

But OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan and OC Intelligence Maj.-Gen. Moshe Ya'alon reportedly believe the time is not right for a withdrawal. They believe that not only are there warnings of attacks, but that there is a fear settlers will hold demonstrations and provoke clashes.

"I don't think we will finish the matter in one meeting. The issue is very complicated. It will take a number of meetings until we make a decision," Peres said in Herzliya.

Maj.-Gen. Oren Shabor, coordinator of activities in the territories, said he believes the pullout should be delayed until after the elections, Channel 2 reported. The pullout is to leave the IDF in control of Kiryat Arba, the six Jewish enclaves in Hebron, and Machpela Cave, about 15 percent of the city in which some 20,000 Palestinians live.

In an interview published in Pariz yesterday, Peres said that the closure would remain in force until after the elections.

Asked by the magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* when the clo-

sure would be lifted, Peres replied, according to Reuters: "Not before the elections. I am sure [Palestinian Authority President Yasser] Arafat understands why. The result of the election hinges on security."

The Hebron pullout was to have been completed by March 28, but Peres delayed it indefinitely following the bus bombings. He also linked it to the PNC changing its covenant.

The army has said that it would take about 10 hours to transfer the city to the Palestinian Police.

Speaking to students at the Herzliya Interdisciplinary Center for Business, Law, and Technology, Peres said the redeployment in Hebron "depends on one thing. If we can ensure the security there, we will keep our promise [to evacuate the IDF from the Palestinian quarters]. The problem in Hebron is the Hamas element there, which is larger than in other towns."

He lashed out at the right-wing parties' demand that the redeployment be postponed, saying: "I'm astonished by this argument. I heard the right wing has decided to adopt the Oslo agreements. According to these agreements, we must redeploy the forces in Hebron. So I would expect the right wing to support the redeployment enthusiastically."

He reiterated Labor's position that the results of final status negotiations with the Palestinians - and with Syria over the Golan - would be submitted to a referendum. He also stressed that Jerusalem would remain united and under Israeli sovereignty forever.

"Arafat can dream," he said. "I attended a press conference with Arafat where one of the journalists asked him, 'How can you talk, in Peres's presence, of your desire to form a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital?' Arafat replied: 'Can't I dream?' I said to him: 'There's a difference between a dream and an agreement. For a dream, all you need is one. For an agreement, you need two.' We cannot deprive Arafat of his right to dream."

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המפלגה "ניצחונות עם ושמחה"

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Hizbullah vows to avenge 'Kana innocents'

A LEADING Hizbullah official has vowed to exact a bitter and bloody vengeance upon Israel and Prime Minister Shimon Peres for the Kana village tragedy.

"The blood of our martyrs will set the battlefield on fire. We have an obligation to make the enemy pay for its crimes," Sheikh Nabil Kaouk, head of Hizbullah in south Lebanon, said in a broadcast on the organization's

radio station.

"The bodies of the innocents and their families are looking to the holy fighters to avenge them and show the bodies of the occupiers torn to pieces like the bodies of our own people."

"I promise you," Kaouk said, "we will make the butcher Peres feel the pain."

He made the speech in the wake of the mass funeral on

DAVID RUDGE
and news agencies

Tuesday for the 102 people killed when IDF gunners accidentally shelled UNIFIL's Fijian battalion headquarters in Kana village, where hundreds of civilians had taken refuge from the Operation Grapes of Wrath fighting.

Hizbullah officials have said they will not confine the revenge

attacks to the security zone.

Hizbullah has also pledged to aid south Lebanese villagers whose houses or shops were destroyed in the operation.

"As of next Monday morning, the party will give owners of houses and shops which were completely destroyed immediate financial help to start rebuilding," Hizbullah parliamentarian Mohammed Raed said yesterday.

Hizbullah's housing branch - known as the Construction Jihad - will repair damaged houses free of charge, he added.

Hizbullah leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah said on Tuesday that Hizbullah is contacting every family whose home was destroyed and offering to rent a house for them for up to a year in the same village or nearby while they rebuild their homes.

'Talks with Syria to resume after elections'

ISRAELI-SYRIAN peace talks will resume after the May 29 elections, Foreign Minister Elad Barak said yesterday.

Barak, who was speaking to a gathering of accountants at Kfar Hamaccabiah in Ramat Gan, said Israel suspended the talks due to the suicide bus bombings.

However, he confirmed that Israel and Syria continue to maintain an "indirect dialogue."

When talks resume, Barak said, Israel won't discuss the depth of withdrawal until it gets an indication of the extent of ties Damascus seeks.

Israel will also seek Syrian clarifications on their positions on Lebanon and water, Barak said.

"Revealing Israel's position

now on its willingness to withdraw from the Golan Heights would be tantamount to showing its cards to its opponent and a mistake in negotiations," he said.

Barak emphasized that negotiations with the Syrians would affect the situation in Lebanon.

"The only times there was quiet with Hizbullah were when Israel and Syria were conducting talks."

Regarding Hebron, he said there was no reason to implement the withdrawal "in one day." He said he saw no reason for the IDF to redeploy from Hebron before the elections.

But he emphasized that this was only his opinion and he would accept any government decision on the matter. (Itm)

US concerned over Russia's closure of two Jewish Agency centers

A FLURRY of diplomatic activity in Washington, Moscow, and Jerusalem, as well as pressure from US Jewish leaders, yesterday led to a US State Department statement expressing concern over the closure of certain Jewish Agency centers in Russia.

Meanwhile, Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg arrived in New York for a 10-hour visit, during which he held intensive talks with some 15 Jewish leaders on strategies for dealing with the closure of the agency's offices in Birobidzhan and Piargorsk, regional headquarters for aliya from the Caucasus.

They were believed to be discussing various contingency plans, including a concerted

BATSHEVA TSUR

worldwide Jewish campaign, to make it possible for the agency to continue its aliya operations in case the situation worsened.

Simultaneously, agency experts continued talks with officials of the Russian Justice Ministry on redefining the legal status of the Jewish Agency in that country, after being informed retroactively that on April 2 new laws made it imperative to apply for a different mandate.

The agency had been operating under a mandate, granted in April 1993, to provide educational, religious, cultural, and sports activities and facilities for Russian Jews and permitting it to deal

with emigration to Israel, including the transport of people and luggage. The mandate was for an indefinite period, but included a clause permitting its revocation by the Justice Ministry.

The negotiations are reportedly proceeding without special problems. In Russia, emissaries are reportedly continuing with regular activities in the various agency centers - except for Piargorsk and Birobidzhan - albeit with an eye on the new laws.

There were no reports of a decline in interest in aliya nor of cancellation of agency activities and flights out of Russia. Agency officials denied reports that men of conscription age are being prevented from going abroad.

High Court rejects petition on Abu Abbas

THE High Court of Justice yesterday rejected without a hearing a petition demanding the trial of Achille Lauro hijacker Mohammed (Abo) Abbas, saying the petitioner, New York Assemblyman Dov Hikind, does not have standing in an Israeli court.

The decision is surprising, because the court has allowed petitions from foreigners in the past. In 1993, for instance, the court heard nine petitions asking that Joho Demjanjuk, recently acquitted of being "Ivan the Terrible" of Treblinka, be tried for having served as an SS guard at Sobibor.

One of these petitions came

EVELYN GORDON

from Canadian legal researcher Kenneth Narvey; another came from the World Jewish Congress and the Canadian human rights group InterAmicus.

Justices Yitzhak Zamir, Shlomo Levine, and Dorit Beinisch explained that in general, petitioners who are not directly affected by a case derive standing from the general obligations of a civil servant toward the Israeli public.

It is the court's responsibility to see that these obligations are fulfilled.

However, they said, it is not

clear that an Israeli civil servant has any such obligations toward a foreigner.

"If somebody was not injured personally... then who is he that he should come from abroad to demand, in an Israeli court, that a civil servant... should do his duty in accordance with the laws of Israel?" they wrote.

However, they did not explain why this case should be different from the Demjanjuk affair, saying that since the petition had not addressed the standing issue, it was enough for them to assert, without explanation, that Hikind had no standing in this particular case.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Yassin: Reveal location of Sa'adon's body

Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the imprisoned spiritual leader of Hamas, said in an interview broadcast on Israel TV Channel 1 last night that those who know where murdered soldier Ilan Sa'adon is buried should reveal the location for humanitarian reasons. The whole interview is to be broadcast tonight.

Yassin, jailed six years ago, was also interviewed last year on the anniversary of Sa'adon's kidnapping, when he first called for the return of his body to his family for proper burial.

Hamas militants have said they respect his demands but would not take as an order anything he said while interviewed by the Israeli media in an Israeli prison. *Jon Immanuel*

Stabbing victim's condition improves

The condition of Nissim Gedawi, stabbed in the back in the Hebron cashah on Wednesday, was upgraded yesterday from serious to moderate-to-serious. He is in Hadassah-University Hospital in Jerusalem's Ein Kerem. *Itm*

Bibi appoints special Meshulam committee

Prisons Service Commissioner Arye Bibi has appointed a committee to deal with Uzi Meshulam and 12 of his followers, incarcerated at Ramle's Ayalon Prison. Bibi has, for the time being, stopped the group's right to receive visitors, phone calls and other privileges, following a recent illegal visit by followers who posed as Amnesty International officials. Bibi is reportedly also concerned the group will continue its sporadic hunger strikes, and said the committee will treat Meshulam and his supporters "with an iron fist." *Raine Marcus*

Winning numbers and cards

IN last night's Payis Hazak drawing, the holder of ticket number 697786 won NIS 1 million. The holder of ticket 415951 won a car.

Tickets numbered 463123, 025378, 645446, 863464, 249165, 806319, 843597 and 412154 won NIS 5,000.

Those tickets ending in 40993, 75157, 00402, 50938, 05679, 84047, 41165, 30519, 23099, 25273, 29641, 41012, 66806, 56867, 93161, 94662, 16468 and 34295 won NIS 1,000. Tickets ending in 125, 227, 323, and 003 won NIS 100. Tickets ending in 46, 54, 81, 72 won NIS 30. Tickets ending in 82 and 23 won NIS 20. Tickets ending in 7 and 3 won NIS 10.

In yesterday's Mifal Hapayis daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the A of spades, A of hearts, K of diamonds, and 9 of clubs.

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- Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim, 329.6.



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IDF: Palestinian VIPs misusing status to smuggle Gaza students



Kibbutz and moshav members bring a cow to the main branch of Bank Hapoalim in Tel Aviv yesterday. They said this was in partial payment of their debt to the bank, which has been milking them for years. (Yossi Zeiger/TPA)

ISRAEL has protested to the Palestinian Authority that its VIPs are misusing travel passes to smuggle students from Gaza, and said two senior PA officials "who endangered public security" would no longer be recognized as VIPs, the spokesman for the government coordinator in the territories said yesterday.

Shlomo Dror said his office, headed by Maj.-Gen. Oreo Shahor, would reexamine the entire procedure of granting VIPs passes to enter Israel due to the abuses. Dror said Shahor sent a letter to PA Minister for Civil Affairs Jamil Tariqi, stating that Israel was invalidating the VIP passes of Minister of Social Affairs Indisar Wazir (Um Jihad) and Abdel Rahman Hamed, in charge of energy.

"I am notifying you of the cancellation of the Israeli recognition of their VIP status, because we have unequivocal proof that they misused their privilege to smuggle students from Gaza, who are barred from entering Judea and Samaria, into the West Bank campus of Bir Zeit University, thus endangering the security of the public," Shahor wrote.

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Dror said the incidents were discovered following the arrest of the students.

Without VIP status, Wazir and Hamed will be treated as ordinary Palestinians. This means they will need to obtain Israel permission to travel through Israel and they will be subjected to security checks. Permission for them to bring in escorts or guards is also revoked.

"We see this as a very grave and gross misuse of the trust we put in them. This also could harm the relationship we have with other Palestinian VIPs," Dror said.

Shahor wrote: "We extended our trust to the heads of the Palestinian Authority, which bears ultimate responsibility that there be no suspicion that they would misuse their VIP status. This incident violates this trust."

He also warned that this incident would make Israel less ready to agree to future Palestinian requests to ease the treatment of VIPs.

"We did it out of consideration for them. But they misused it. VIP status is not diplo-

made immunity," Dror said.

There are some 80 VIPs with A status, which means they can travel with an escort and guard and not be subjected to security searches. There are another 160 with B status, who are given special treatment, but are open to searches and cannot bring in escorts or guards.

Jon Immanuel adds:

Sufian Abu Zayde, head of the PA's Israel desk, said that if the Israeli claim is true, it was a "mistake" and the reasons for it would have to be examined. "However, the whole matter has been blown out of proportion."

The important thing to note, he said, is that "they were not smuggled in the baggage compartment. They were passengers, whom the Israelis saw and were told were escorts or guards. The problem can be solved simply by having the VIPs supply the names of their escorts ahead of time, so that the Israeli side can check them out."

"We are not talking about smuggling someone who endangered Israeli security, but students who had to reach their universities and certainly were not planning any attacks."

Baram to Peres: Announce slot for an Arab minister in next cabinet

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

TOURISM Minister Uzi Baram will recommend to Prime Minister Shimon Peres that he announce he will appoint an Arab minister to his cabinet, if he wins the elections.

Baram said yesterday that the decision is up to Peres, "but when I speak to the prime minister, I will recommend appointing an Arab minister and announcing it now. This has been my position for years."

MK Haggi Merom agreed, saying Labor must appoint an Arab minister, even though the next cabinet will be limited to 18 ministers.

Baram and Merom spoke at a press conference held by the heads of Labor's campaign for the Arab sector. They were accompanied by MK Nawaf Masalha and Nadia Hilon, the first Arab woman to be elected to the party's Knesset list.

Baram said Operation Grapes of Wrath had decreased Arab support for Labor and Peres, but estimated that the rift was temporary and would not have a long-term effect on the Arab vote.

"If elections were held today, I doubt whether the Arab public would stand as one behind Peres. There is anger and deep criticism. But it is already fading and I don't believe it will determine the Arabs' voting patterns in a big way," he said.

Labor's campaign in the Arab sector, for which a special jingle in Arabic was composed, will be held under the slogan of "Peace and Equality," emphasizing that equality for the Arab sector can only be achieved if there is peace.

Merom charged Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu with insincerity in his campaigning for the Arab vote "under the guise of one who supports equality for the Arab sector. Netanyahu and the Likud acted systematically to delegitimize the Arab vote in the Knesset. During the entire Knesset term they claimed the government was leaning on the illegitimate Arab vote. One who objects to having Arabs in the Knesset cannot tell them today how much he wants equality for

them. He doesn't understand the essence of equality."

One of the campaign's main goals is to bring as many Arab voters as possible to the polling booths, with the hope of increasing the Arab vote rate from 70% in the last elections to 80% this year, or similar to the Jewish voting rate.

The campaign heads will impress upon the Arab voters that abstaining from voting, or putting a blank note in the ballot box in protest, will defeat their interests, because it will strengthen the right wing. "Abstaining means voting for Netanyahu, Sharon, Rafal and Gandhi," one of Labor's slogans in the Arab sectors will say.

PA officials attending ulpan

Palestinian Authority officials joined tourists and new immigrants at Ulpan Akiva in Netanya yesterday to begin a 24-day intensive course to improve their Hebrew. Top officials from the Transport, Finance, and Economic ministries are among the 13 students.

Likud protests Dor Shalom's use of police symbol

BILL HUTMAN

THE Likud is up in arms over the use of the official police emblem in advertisements for an event organized by a group closely aligned with the Labor Party. The event is scheduled for tomorrow evening in Tel Aviv's Yitzhak Rabin Square.

The police released a statement yesterday saying it had ordered the group, Dor Shalom, to remove the emblem. A police spokesman said this was done independently of a similar request by a lawyer representing the Likud.

In a letter to Police Inspector-General Assaf Hefetz, the Likud protested the use of the emblem,

saying it made the event — a concert organized to mark six months since the assassination of Rabin and to show support for the peace process — appear state-sponsored.

The police spokesman said Dor Shalom hadn't asked permission to use the emblem, and had removed it from its newspaper advertisements immediately, when ordered to do so.

Dor Shalom spokesman Noam Kedan said he had believed it was acceptable to use the police emblem to show that traffic and other logistical arrangements had been coordinated with the police.

Meretz: Labor has given in to religious parties

The sections on religion in Labor's new platform do not bode well for the next four years, Meretz leader Yossi Sa'id said yesterday. He said Labor had surrendered to the religious parties' demands.

He noted that planks from previous platforms calling for yeshiva students to serve in the IDF and for a separation of religion and politics had vanished from this platform. *Jerusalem Post Staff*

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Oded Ben-Ami named new IDF spokesman

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

ODED Ben-Ami, who was Yitzhak Rabin's media adviser and a former reporter for Israel Radio and TV, has been appointed the next IDF Spokesman, the IDF announced.

He is to take over in mid-June from Brig.-Gen. Amos Gilad, who will be appointed head of the research division of military intelligence, the IDF said.

The current head of the research division, Maj.-Gen. Ya'acov Amidror, will be given another posting in the IDF, the army said. Ben-Ami's appointment was approved by Prime Minister Shimon Peres. The position is one of a brigadier-general, but it is not yet clear whether Ben-Ami will be given the rank.

Ben-Ami quit his post as the defense minister's spokesman last summer after Rabin appointed Aliza Goren as his media adviser in the Prime Minister's Office.

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NEWS IN FOCUS

Friday, May 3, 1996

7

Shalom, Hebron

History, ideology and reality are on a collision course as the IDF prepares to redeploy in the ancient city, Jon Immanuel reports

HEBRON on Wednesday. The Jewish Quarter is quieter than it has been for a long time. That is because no one is around. The younger settlers have gone to Jerusalem to express their concern that the government is about to abandon them to Arab wrath. "Hebron 1929?" asks one placard.

Within an hour, Hebron's cashbah is closed after the vicious stabbing of Nissim Gidawi, a 72-year-old Yemeni-born Jew who shopped there for 23 years and spoke the language of local Palestinians.

A couple of settlers who have not yet left for Jerusalem overturn a dozen vegetable stalls in anger. The stall owners' only crimes were being near the scene of the crime and professing the same religion as the likely perpetrator. The assailant's only reason for stabbing an old man in the back was the victim's religion.

A couple of rats run through the piles of trampled cucumbers, tomatoes and oranges.

"Who are these people who incite hate, breed fear, kill hope? Think! Reject hate. Love Life," says the sweatshirt which Shula Cohen wears behind the cash desk of her grocery in Kiryat Arba.

Cohen has lived in Kiryat Arba for 20 years and says, "I like the air here." And she also claims that she doesn't know enough English to

read what her T-shirt proclaims. "I liked the design." Her world is her shop and her family. Her ideology is *shalom al Yisrael*, peace on Israel.

Perhaps she is part of Kiryat Arba's silent majority who do not get involved. But she was one of the few to stay at home Wednesday, like Nahum and Rayeh Lekomovitz, a Russian secular immigrant couple who do the cooking at the Yeshiva of the Cave of the Patriarchs.

Slogans on sweatshirts, bumper stickers and walls play a large part in the lives of settlers renewing the Jewish presence in Hebron. The issues have been reduced to slogans which leave no room for self-questioning.

AGAINST THE reality of 400 Jews and 90,000 Arabs, and what-over rights this "foreign" landslide majority might have, the slogans win. It is pointed out that Jews were once a minority in Tel Aviv-Jaffa where biblical rights are weaker. Here, the government is abandoning Jewish lives, Jewish history, "Jerusalem is the Jewish heart, Hebron is Jewish roots," said National Religious Party leader Zevulun Hammer. The NRP's election slogans are papered around Kiryat Arba.

The epitaph on Baruch Goldstein's grave - that he died

"for Torah and the people of Israel" - is a slogan that defies reason and insults Israel. But his wife claims he too was a victim of Arab terror because he was killed after he ran out of ammunition and was therefore defenseless. Even Kiryat Arba people who are appalled by his deed fail to connect it in any way with the ideology which drives Hebron's settlers.

But the massacre is a logical conclusion from other slogans: The Arabs kill because they hate us. They only understand force. A strong government does not capitulate. Jewish blood is not expendable. Arabs out. Kill the Arabs.

The stabbings, the demonstrations, the overturned stalls have been part of the rhythm of Hebron life since a Jewish presence was reestablished. The massacre of 69 Jews by Arabs in 1929 spurred the desire to resettle in the area after the Six Day War. The killing of six Jews by Arabs in 1980 laid the cornerstone of legalized Jewish settlement in Hebron.

The intensity of the struggle for control over Hebron, which Arabs call Al-Halil ("the beloved"; the Hebrew, Hebron, is from the root for "friend") has amounted to a competition over who is the favorite son of Abraham, after whom it is named.

Young children in Kiryat Arba



IDF soldiers escort two Palestinians who were arrested after the stabbing of a Kiryat Arba resident on Wednesday in Hebron's cashbah. Fruit and vegetables litter the ground after settlers overturned Arab stalls in reaction to the attack. (Reuters)

are far more politically aware than their peers in other settlements and more radical in their statements to outsiders than adults. Growups do not hesitate to bring children to their demonstrations, though.

All outsiders are suspected Arab lovers. Children as young as three or four have approached American

church-sponsored Peacemakers and said, "I want to throw a stone at you," the Christians have reported. The most radical Jewish extremism, leading to the Goldstein massacre in the Ibrahim Mosque, grew in its streets.

The IDF redeployment in Hebron

is inevitable and the arguments against it which are being made now are a last-ditch effort to prevent the inevitable. It would have taken place four months ago, but the government, fearful of problems, insisted on a three-month delay beyond the pullback from other Palestinian towns. It then

extended the delay after the suicide bombings in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, and again until the Palestinian National Council voted to amend its radically anti-Israel covenant.

Now elections may postpone its completion, though the process is (Continued on Page 8)

Dealing with the demographics

Two leading Israeli geographers have produced a 'non-political' analysis of the territories, reports Abraham Rabinovich

ON the eve of final-status talks that are to decide the fate of Judea and Samaria, two Israeli geographers have drawn up an unofficial proposal under which Israel would seek to retain up to 18 percent of the territory, an area in which 86 percent of settlers presently live.

Based on a detailed analysis of Arab and Jewish population concentrations beyond the green line, the proposal by Prof. Elisha Efrat of Tel Aviv University and Prof. Yossi Katz of Bar-Ilan University provides fallback negotiating options that would scale down the amount of territory retained by Israel by up to 3 percent. First-priority areas include 67 of the existing 122 settlements and 52 percent of settlers.

In an interview this week, Efrat said that he and Katz had initiated the work in order to make available to the Israeli negotiators - should they wish to avail themselves of it - a detailed analysis by professional geographers of the demographic and territorial realities in Judea and Samaria.

"Final-status talks are scheduled to start on Sunday and are to be concluded within three years. There is no geographer I know of who has been asked by the government to carry out such a study," said Efrat, formerly in charge of national and regional planning in the Interior Ministry.

"Our proposal is professional and non-political," Efrat said that he himself was inclined politically to Labor and Meretz while his Bar-Ilan colleague, a resident of Gush Etzion, was a supporter of the National Religious Party.

"Whichever government conducts final-status talks," say the authors in their proposal, "there is no doubt that the demographic realities will constitute a major factor in its considerations. We are analyzing the space they have in which to maneuver." Final-status talks get underway on Sunday and are to be concluded within three years.

A similar proposal was made last year by Dr. Yossi Alper, formerly of the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University, who suggested Israeli annexation of 11 percent of Judea, Samaria and Gaza, an area that would include 70 percent of Israeli settlers.

While Alper's map also related to the density of Israeli settlements on the ground, it was essentially a political-strategic document that called for annexation of areas abutting the Green Line, from Wadi Ara to Gush Etzion as well as the northern tip of the

lower Jordan Valley. The Efrat-Katz proposal is a demographic document that relates exclusively to relative densities of Arab and Jewish populations and not to strategic lines. It does not call for a general eastward shifting of the Green Line and it differs from the Alper proposals in that it envisages islands of Jewish settlement within the Palestinian area.

Some 30,000 of the 1.1 million Arabs in Judea and Samaria would be incorporated in the annexed areas under this proposal but the authors suggest the possibility of a "functional" arrangement whereby Israelis and Arabs residing in such ethnic islands would be linked politically to Israel and the Palestinian entity respectively.

The proposal calls for some minor amendments to the Oslo 2 agreement which presently divides the territory into three sectors - A, urban areas under full Palestinian control; B, rural areas under limited Palestinian control; and C, areas under full Israeli control.

"In some cases we advocate removing Arab villages from Area B status and incorporating them in areas of Israeli sovereignty," say the authors. These changes would incorporate about 20 villages inhabited by some 30,000 Arabs into Israeli territory.

The proposal does not relate to the Gaza Strip - in which some 800,000 Arabs and 4,000 Israeli settlers live in an area of 340 square kilometers. Nor does it relate to Jerusalem or to non-territorial factors like water resources.

Following are the major blocs of settlements envisaged by the authors falling under Israeli sovereignty:

- The Ariel bloc between the trans-Samaria road and the Kalkilya-Nablus road. "The proximity of this strip to the Green Line and its location between two main road arteries gives it an outstanding relative advantage," says the proposal. "Its annexation would require cancellation of Area B status for a number of Arab villages."

- Gush Etzion, including Efrat and Be'er. Here too, annexation would involve incorporation of several Arab villages presently in Area B.

- The Hashmonaim bloc abutting the Green Line near Latrun.

- The lower Jordan Valley, except for the Jericho district, from the Allon Road to the river. This strip of Israeli sovereign territory would extend down the (Continued on Page 8)



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Pacts and backslaps as election nears

Peres and Clinton heaped praise on each other in Washington as they forswore interference in each other's reelection campaigns, Ilie Kuttler reports

FOUR years! Four more years! Four more years! 3,000 people chanted and night as US President Bill Clinton waved to the crowd in the vast Washington Convention Hotel ballroom.

This was a run-of-the-mill campaign rally with Israeli and American flags arranged alongside Peres, and not with Prime Minister Shimon Peres standing at Clinton's side.

Four months are exactly what both he to win in this year's election in both countries. The deal gave enough signals that he also wanted each other stay in office through the year 2000.

While Israeli security cooperation and the pace of the peace process were central themes of Peres's visit, the campaigns were not far from their minds.

In two major events this week - their speeches Sunday night to the annual conference of the American Public Affairs Council and Tuesday's White House signing of a counterterrorism accord - Clinton and Peres praised one another endlessly.

Peres especially so. Before AIPAC, he ably anointed Clinton as the greatest friend of Israel for being Jerusalem's greatest-ever friend in the White House,

for shedding a tear and offering Israelis a shoulder to cry on after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin and this year's terror attacks.

At Tuesday's ceremony he said: "You cannot lead the camp of freedom unless you have a leader of great inspiration and outstanding capacity. In my own judgment, Bill Clinton has this great capacity to inspire the whole free world with his ideas, with his determination, with his capacity to distinguish what is right and what is wrong, what is immediate and what is long-range."

"I feel myself very lucky to see a person like him standing ahead and trying to lead the whole world to peace."

AT ONE point during his three-day US visit, Peres feigned ignorance of Republican challenger Robert Dole's name before smilingly saying the Senate majority leader was in fact a good friend of Israel.

Clinton praised Peres at AIPAC for "carrying through the important work of peace with security," being a "true and reliable friend" of the US and for showing, in the aftermath of Rabin's death, that he could "rise to this moment."

He even pronounced Peres's



Prime Minister Shimon Peres and US President Bill Clinton sit down simultaneously right before Tuesday's signing of a counterterrorism accord at the White House.

recent book "remarkable" and made a pitch for "a certain percentage kickback" for saying so.

Clinton asserted that the events this week were in no way meant to influence Israel's voters.

"In democracies we schedule elections, and that's a good

thing. It reminds everybody that the people are in charge," Clinton said when asked about electioneering. "But I think it is not only appropriate, it is virtually necessary for the prime minister to come here at this time in the wake of recent events...."

"The US has always said that we do not interfere in the internal decisions of other countries. Israel and the US are friends and allies, and that will be the case no matter who is elected. [Israelis] have shown pretty good judgment for quite a long

while now, and I'm sure that the prime minister would join me in saying that they're in the driver's seat on that question, not me and no anyone else."

Peres's first order of business upon landing here Sunday was signing an accord with Defense

Secretary William Perry providing for joint development of the Nautilus missile-defense system using laser technology. The accord was in part a direct response to the recent wave of Katyusha rockets falling on northern Israel.

The counterterrorism initiative also dates to other pivotal, recent events - the February and March suicide bombings in Israel - in the aftermath of which Peres's lead over Likud challenger Binyamin Netanyahu sank.

Peres, Clinton and Perry said all the right things about the accords representing yet another notch in the bedpost of the US-Israel love fest of mutual values and strategic cooperation.

WITH YASSER Arafat jetting into town for a White House meeting just as Peres was leaving for Paris, the peace process was never out of mind. The Washington Post opined the morning of the signing of the counterterrorism accord that the Clinton administration's Middle East diplomacy "can move forward only if Mr. Peres and his Labor Party prevail in elections on May 29."

Clinton's support for Israel during Operation Grapes of Wrath is a "sort of American indulgence [that] translates inside Israel into direct support for Mr. Peres at the polls," the paper said.

And, the paper's lead editorial added, the agreements announced here "can help Mr. Peres face down the unwarranted but still damaging charge at home that he is soft on security." Let the races begin.

Torn between community and party

Following the Kana tragedy, Nadia Hilou, Labor's leading Arab lady, has a tough job on her hands, Itzhak Yudelman reports

OPERATION Grapes of Wrath broke Labor's election campaign in the Arab sector to a grinding halt.

Even before the assassinations of the fighting in Lebanon on Israel's Arabs were known, was clear to Minister Uzi Bar, chairman of Labor's drive for Arab vote, that this was not time to go campaigning for Labor or for Prime Minister Shimon Peres.

Then the reactor started pouring in from the Arab community, confirming Bar's fears and indicating that unprecedented rift had developed between Israel's Arabs and those who until now had always been for them - "Mr. Peace."

Now the Arab community's favorite leader was responsible for the closure on the Palestinians in the territories and was bombing their brethren in Lebanon.

The tragic bombing of an ambulance, the killing of the family in Nabatiya and the Kana disaster, in which more than 100 Lebanese civilians were killed, sent shock waves through the Israeli Arab community.

For Nadia Hilou the first Arab woman to be elected to Labor's Knesset list, this is a difficult, almost impossible period to go through.

Hilou, a prominent member of Jaffa's Arab community and in charge of wing the Arab

women's vote in Labor's campaign for the Arab sector, was torn between her natural solidarity with the Arab community, and her loyalty to the party.

As an Arab woman, she is living the crisis in the most immediate way, in her everyday contact with the Arab residents. The anger in Jaffa is still strong. Arab friends and acquaintances argue with her, some even attacked her for being part of a party which could be responsible for such a thing.

"People are upset. There was a lot of talk about removing the traditional Arab support for Peres. People said to me, look what your prime minister is doing. How can you be a part of that?"

"The trouble is, I can understand them. I feel the same way. I share the pain and horror at seeing innocent people die."

"I felt the same after the suicide bombings in Dizengoff and Jerusalem. Then too, as Arabs, we had a horrible time. As part of the community I live in. That's the double hardship of being an Israeli Arab."

Hilou, who was elected number 37 on Labor's Knesset list in the primaries, insisted on running on the national, more prestigious list, rather than on the "minorities" slot reserved for an Arab candidate.

She is not only the first and only Arab woman on Labor's Knesset



Hilou: People said to me, look what your prime minister is doing. How can you be a part of that?

list, she is the only Arab woman Knesset candidate on any party's list.

She defeated five Arab candidates contending in the national primaries, and points out proudly that she was the only one who received votes from both Arab and Jewish party members.

This week Hilou joined Labor's concerted efforts to restore the Arab sector's support in Peres and the Labor Party.

It was not an easy task, she admitted, after a harrowing meeting with Arab leaders in Shfaram.

"The reactions were extremely sharp and emotional. But we have to overcome our emotions and see that Prime Minister Shimon Peres is the leader who made peace and will continue the process."

"I too found it hard to overcome

my feelings when I saw the children's bodies, the blood and the victims."

"But I refuse to give up. I know I've chosen the right way and I'm not going to change my mind."

The Arabs Hilou has been meeting also realize there is no alternative to Peres. "He's the only candidate possible for Israeli Arabs, if we want to advance the peace process on the one hand, and obtain equality and narrow the social gaps on the other," she said.

"I tell them if there's any hope for us, it's Peres's government. Everybody knows the peace process requires two equal partners, two nations, if it is to work. It's clear the Likud does not regard the Palestinians as a partner."

"How can you have peace without open communication and recognizing the other side as an equal?"

Hilou, 42, was born and raised in Jaffa to a large family whose members are spread in Jaffa, Ramle and Lod. Her husband comes from Rama in Galilee, from a family spanning Haifa, Nazareth, Rama and Kafr Yasif.

She graduated with an M.A. from Tel Aviv University, where she published the first research of its kind on juvenile delinquency, and its effects on families, friends and environment in a mixed town like Jaffa.

Hilou is the director of the Hirsch Center for children in Jaffa, a unique project specializing in providing integral health, education, culture and welfare services to both Jewish and Arab children and parents. The center also gives parenting training courses.

Hilou lectures university stu-

dents on social work, guides youth and parent groups, develops Arab-Jewish study programs and is involved in a variety of public activities.

Among other things, she is a member of the Socialist Workers' Union, the National Council for the Welfare of Children, the Municipal Women's Council to Promote Women's Status, the Jaffa Arab Women's Forum and the Experts Committee for Needy Youth. She is also a member of the board of the Tel Aviv Arts Foundation.

A determined and ambitious woman, the slim, honey-blond Hilou joined Labor a year ago, believing she could do more to promote both Arabs and Arab women's interests in Israeli society as a Labor Knesset member, than as a member of one of the Arab parties.

Her main task is to convince Arab women, who in the past have tended to vote in much lower numbers than their male counterparts, to go to the polls this time round - preferably for Peres and Labor, of course.

"I may be the only Arab woman on Labor's list. But the Arab parties have no Arab women candidates at all. Arab women can see what I've done and where I got to as part of Labor. I believe most of them will vote en masse for Peres and Labor," she asserts.

She has four daughters. The eldest is studying social work and the second is about to study law. Both participated in youth delegation debates about the Arab-Jewish conflict abroad. The two younger ones, 11-year-old twins, are showing promise as violinists.

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Leaders look to Lebanon's 'independent' future

WHAT a difference a fortnight makes. Just two weeks ago, Prime Minister Shimon Peres was ordering the shelling of Lebanon. This week, while visiting the US, he was touting Lebanese reconstruction. Moreover, he insisted that even in the aftermath of the carnage, the country had new prospects of freedom from Syrian domination.

Peres certainly had an interest in talking about Lebanon's future rather than its past, as he wanted a feel-good visit to the US on the eve of the May 29 elections. And his approach succeeded.

Last week Peres was being called the killer of Kana by Arabs who did not want to hear explanations about errant shelling; this week, he was touted as a "peacemaker" by President Bill Clinton, American media, movie stars such as Richard Gere and other celebrities at a dinner hosted by the Israeli Consulate in New York. Clinton even blamed Hizballah for firing rockets so

close to a civilian area, a sympathetic defense which Peres happily proclaimed to be "unprecedented."

Speaking to reporters this week after meeting Clinton, a buoyant Peres spoke at length about how Israel will help put together an international consortium to help reconstruct Lebanon. "Just like we help put together a group for the Palestinians," Peres said confidently. But he admitted that Israel is not even close to deciding on putting together the shape of its contribution.

Yet Peres made clear that Lebanese reconstruction would have far-reaching political - not just economic - importance, as it would work to pry Lebanon loose from Syrian domination. Power would follow the money.

The prime minister insisted that the "most important diplomatic" discovery emerging from his trip was learning from both President Bill Clinton and France's President Jacques Chirac that both think more can be done to promote Lebanon's independence.

The significance of a free

Presidents Clinton and Chirac both want to promote greater Lebanese independence from Syria, David Makovsky reports from Washington

Lebanon would indeed have crucial significance for Israel in southern Lebanon. If Lebanon did not have to look over its shoulder to Damsascus, it would enable the Lebanese Army to deploy in the south of the country, and disarm Hizballah just as it disarmed several militias in the country. Then the IDF could pull out of the Security Zone, Israeli officials say, and a peace treaty could be reached over a cup of coffee.

HOWEVER, desirability is not the same as feasibility. Peres gets annoyed when journalists ask how such a scenario of Lebanese independence will come true with 55,000 to 40,000 Syrian soldiers on Lebanese soil.

While Peres cites Clinton as favoring greater Lebanese independence, senior officials in

Clinton's administration are dismissive of Peres's notion that it can occur as a result of the international assistance promised by US-brokered diplomacy last week. One senior administration official asked rhetorically, "What would be in it for Syria to allow Lebanon to be pried loose by the world, especially while nothing is happening on Syria's own peace track with Israel?"

Syria, which went to the Madrid Conference believing no other Arab partner could defy its will, only to see the Palestinians and Jordan cut their own deals with Israel, is not about to let Beirut slip through its fingers. A year ago, when the Lebanese even hinted at the possibility of the Lebanese track moving ahead of stalled Syrian talks, Syrian officials arrived in Beirut and quickly quashed this

notion. This view has been echoed by Lebanese US-based scholar Fouad Ajami, who has said his native land will be the last to enjoy the fruits of peace.

The US administration official confirmed the widespread view that Syria wants to negotiate the future of the Golan while Israel is under fire in southern Lebanon. Specifically, Damascus views Hizballah as an irreplaceable tool for Damascus's peace talks with Israel. Syria believes that, without an uncomfortable Lebanese intifada of sorts, Israel will not give up the Golan.

Syria therefore continues to dangle the notion of a package deal which would include the disarming of Hizballah as the final prize for Israel ceding the Golan. Damascus tells US officials it is confident that it could muzzle the Iranian-backed

Hizballah should there be a peace treaty with Israel, since Iran has promised Syrianot to undermine any deal that Damascus works out with Israel.

But it is hard to fathom the incentive that Syria would have in loosening its grip on Beirut. And it remains unclear why Peres believes, in the aftermath of Grapes of Wrath, that the prospects for greater Lebanese independence from Syria have grown.

One possible theory suggests that Peres, preferring long-term hope to prescriptions for short-term results, seeks to persuade Beirut, as it surveys the wreckage of Grapes of Wrath, that there is light at the end of the tunnel. But Lebanon is unlikely to be convinced.

Another possible theory is that Peres believes what he says, and thinks that the experts are wrong. It should be noted that within a week of the signing of the Oslo accords in September 1993, Peres was pressing the notion that Jordan would be able to defy Damascus and make a separate peace with

Israel. At the time US officials, while big believers - and irresponsible activists - in the Middle East peace process, scoffed at the idea as being unrealistic.

The Jordan experience has given Peres even more confidence than before. In general, Peres loves to see "I am not impressed by the skeptics," and to ask rhetorically, "her were all the Kremlinologists predicting the fall of the Kremlin? None of them saw the Soviet Union would fall? Who needs them?"

Yet the presence of Syrian troops in Lebanon means that the Beirut situation cannot be compared to Amman's defiance of Damascus.

Despite Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's efforts to rebuild Beirut, to make it pulsating center of Middle East life, as it was in the early 1990s, the country remains sandwiched between the power countries of Syria and Israel.

No wonder a Lebanese scholar Ajami is about his country: "When it turns a corner, it meets itself."

Katyusha syndrome takes its toll on Kiryat Shmona

KIRYAT Shmona, a veritable ghost town during Operation Grapes of Wrath, came back to life this week after the last rockets fell on the front-line city just a few minutes before the cease-fire deadline took effect at 4 a.m. last Saturday.

Just four hours later, the air clear was sounded and residents who had remained behind throughout the fighting began to emerge from bomb shelters and take a deep breath of fresh air before going to check their homes.

Families who left the city and were housed in hotels and IDF rest and recreation centers in Ashkelon, Tel Aviv, Netanya and Acre - or had been staying with family or friends elsewhere beyond the Katyusha line - began the trek home.

By Saturday evening, after the end of Shabbat, the trickle of returnees had become a steady flow. Nearly 20,000 of Kiryat Shmona's 24,000 inhabitants left the city during the course of the operation, as the Katyusha rockets continued to fall.

By Sunday afternoon, most of the evacuees had returned. The streets, which were deserted for 18 days, were once again full of vehicles. Shops, offices and factories opened for business and the sidewalks bustled with people, some carrying suitcases, others shopping bags.

People were once again walking, riding, driving in Kiryat Shmona. Signs of life and a return to normality, except for the scars of war damage to factories, holes blasted in the roofs of apartment blocks, a day nursery, homes without windows and walls of buildings pockmarked with shrapnel holes, solar heaters lying burned and twisted on the ground.

Over a quarter, and maybe as much as a third, of the homes in Kiryat Shmona were hit in one way or another by Katyushas. Scores of vehicles were damaged, as well as the 1,300 buildings. The cost of repairing the damage - tens of millions of shekels - does not include the additional cost of lost income for wage earners, lost production of factories and farmers and the damming effect on tourism.

But there are other disturbing

The Upper Galilee's largest city is no longer a ghost town but life is not yet back to normal, David Rudge writes

effects than just the cost in terms of hard cash.

There is no way of calculating the price in terms of emotional strain, stress and trauma, of the residents themselves, or how long it will take for them to fully recuperate.

Only a few people were actually wounded and only one of them - Hani Himi, wife of Kiryat Shmona's deputy mayor - was seriously hurt. She is still detained in Haifa's Rambam Hospital, where she is receiving medical progress. The vast majority of the 127 people dealt with by Magen David Adom - over 100 of them in Kiryat Shmona - in the days prior to and during Operation Grapes of Wrath were treated for shock.

But, as with earthquakes, there are aftershocks, and these are still reverberating. The shock, for instance, of families returning to Kiryat Shmona to find their homes damaged and, in some cases, made uninhabitable.

The last two rockets which hit the town a few minutes before the 4 a.m. cease-fire deadline on Saturday caused further extensive damage. One of the rockets blasted through the roof of a two-story apartment block into the stairwell. One of the top-floor flats was completely destroyed and another below belonging to Yair and Mazal Eliyahu was badly damaged.

The couple and their three young children had been staying at Ramat Eyal near Tel Aviv throughout the operation. They returned once to their home and Mazal had wanted to stay, but Yair persuaded her it would be safer in Ramat Eyal until an agreement and cease-fire were reached.

"Even then Mazal wanted to come back, but I could see the negotiations were taking time and then Shabbat came, so I said we would wait at least until the end of Shabbat," said Yair. "If we had come back on Friday, there would have been a disaster. The room where the children would have

been sleeping was hit. It would have been terrible. It doesn't bear thinking about," he said, with tears welling up in his eyes.

The problem facing the family and their neighbor whose home was destroyed in the last rocket attacks how to manage for another few weeks until repairs are completed.

"Somebody who lives outside the framework of what is termed normal life has a problem," said Yair. "It's not easy. We have been in that situation for over six weeks, if you take into account the rocket attacks and warnings to go into bomb shelters that preceded the operation."

"We have been moved from one place to another, first to Haifa, then back here and then to Ramat Eyal, with all our equipment in the car," he said. "In fact, it's still in the car. We can't unpack, because we can't move back into our home - not in this state. We are still refugees."

Yair and Mazal spent tens of thousands of shekels renovating their home - including new floor tiles, bathroom and kitchen. "We didn't even get a chance to enjoy it," said Mazal, surveying the broken bathroom and kitchen and the cracked walls and ceiling in the living room.

"I just want to get everything fixed as soon as possible, so we can get the children back settled at home and into a routine," said Mazal, sitting down and crying.

A neighbor interrupts, patting her on the back. "It's only walls and tiles. Kapara. Thank God nobody was hurt. That's all that matters," she said consolingly.

"I know," replied Mazal, shaking her head and drying her eyes. "I know."

A few minutes beforehand an argument had erupted among the neighbors. Nobody quite knew what it was all about. A man from another flat nearby tried to calm the situation.

"These are the aftershocks," he said. "This is the real trauma. They have to get the carpenters in, the builders, glaziers, the plumbers to get the water fixed and electricians and get quotes for the cost of the work and get it all approved by the

property tax people. It's a big mess. They are just letting off steam. It's only natural."

For the time being, Yair, 30, a foreman, and Mazal, also 30, and their three children - aged three, four and six - will continue staying at their "new home" at Kibbutz Hagoshirim until repairs on their home are completed and they can move back.

But even that won't end the trauma and emotional stress. Yair and Mazal, like their neighbors and many - if not the majority - of Kiryat Shmona's residents are not convinced that the agreement reached to end the fighting will prevent more rocket attacks in the future.

"I hope that that the rocket that hit our homes here will be the last one ever to fall on Kiryat Shmona or anywhere else in Galilee, but I have to say that I don't have any real faith in this agreement," said Yair. "The 'partners' to this agreement are not serious about adhering to it. The fact is that they [Hizballah] are already issuing threats and warnings. I believe that within six months or so we will be back to the same 'routine of life' - of going into bomb shelters, work one day and not the next, and more rocket attacks - that existed prior to the operation."

Despite his pessimism about the future, Yair stressed he had no intention of leaving Kiryat Shmona. "We won't abandon our home or our town. There were difficult times for people in Tel Aviv [during the Scud missile attacks], if everybody were suddenly to abandon their homes we wouldn't have a state," he said.

Not everybody in Kiryat Shmona, however, shares the same view about staying there. Privately, municipality officials are concerned that many families will leave in the wake of what has been described as the worst rocket attacks in the city's history.

Shula Azaria has worked as secretary at the Korczak elementary school for many years. She was glad to see the children and the teachers when the schools reopened, but she is uncertain about the future.

"I'm very happy that we are getting back to normal, although my



A Kiryat Shmona resident inspects the damage to his home from a Katyusha. (AP/Wide World)

husband and our youngest daughter, who will soon be 11, are still in a state of shock," said Azaria. "My daughter didn't want to go to school, but I insisted that we have to get back to normal. It's not easy, however, not after so many rockets fell on the town, damaging nearly one in every three homes."

"Ours was the second house to be hit at the beginning," she said. "I was standing by the window when the rocket fell and I saw the water heater explode in front of my eyes. I was saved by a miracle. My husband dragged me to the floor,

and all the windows were blown out. I was hospitalized for 24 hours, because I was in a state of shock, and then we went to stay with our other daughter who lives in Haifa."

"I have lived here since 1955, and it's difficult to even think about leaving, but my husband is seriously considering it now," Azaria said. "Maybe there will be peace and quiet and he will reconsider. Maybe the situation will change. We'll just have to wait and see."

And there are still more scars

and aftershocks we have yet to surface. This was the night to light during a short interview with two teenage girls the day they returned to school.

At one point a table was banged, and then a chair fell, accidentally knocking a chair to the floor. Both the girls jumped voluntarily and stared at the sound of the noise. In that fleeting moment it was clear that they, like many of the town's residents, are suffering from the aftershocks of what has become known as the Katyusha syndrome.

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

FRIDAY, MAY 3, 1996

15

Shohat readies plan for aid to North

EVELYN GORDON

A DETAILED plan to aid the towns and villages of the North will be presented to the cabinet on May 12, Finance Minister Avraham Shohat told the Knesset Finance Committee yesterday.

the North a more attractive place to live, the recent Katyusha barges will result in a mass exodus of those residents who can afford to move to the center of the country, leaving the North populated only by the lower classes.

Osem, Nestle in talks to buy Tnuva's ice cream plants

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

OSEM Industries and the Swiss Nestle company are in advanced talks to buy 51 percent of Tnuva's ice cream plants for about \$16 million, Osem has informed the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

niques and add Nestle's products to Tnuva's ice cream line. Tnuva's ice-cream sales are estimated to be NIS 130m-NIS 140m.

US growth surprisingly strong

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Strong consumer spending helped boost economic growth at a surprisingly brisk pace in the first three months of 1996, after a sluggish closing quarter last year, the Commerce Department said yesterday.

France's Danone to buy 20% of Strauss Dairies

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE French-based food giant Danone has signed an agreement in principle to purchase 20 percent of the Strauss group, Israel's largest privately owned food manufacturer.

comment on the sum. Danone will appoint two representatives on the Strauss board of directors, which will give it power in formulating the dairy manufacturer's business strategy.

Strauss dairies. Strauss already uses the Danone brand name on some of its yogurt products.

Israel Phoenix '95 profits hurt by La Nationale's losses

COMPANY RESULTS

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE Israel Phoenix Insurance Company reported a 65 percent drop in net profits in 1995 compared with the previous year, mainly due to large losses in its subsidiary La Nationale.

general insurance (property) division rose 22% to NIS 11.9m, from NIS 9.6m. Premiums from life insurance rose to NIS 845m, from NIS 725m.

The 1995 loss is mainly a result of a loss of NIS 178.5m, from life insurance. Total premiums from the life insurance sector plunged 70% to NIS 300m. from NIS 81m.

ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS. Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (25.4.96). Currency Market for: U.S. dollar (250,000), German mark (200,000), Swiss franc (200,000), Yen (10 million yen). Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (2.5.96). Currency basket, U.S. dollar, German mark, Pound sterling, French franc, Japanese yen (100), Dutch florin, Swiss franc, Swedish krona, Norwegian krone, Danish krone, Finnish mark, Canadian dollar, Australian dollar, S. African rand, Belgian franc (10), Australian schilling (10), Italian lire (1000), Jordanian dinar, Egyptian pound, ECU, Irish punt, Spanish peseta (100).

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New York market indexes
DJ Industrials 5403.57 -21.85
DJ Transport 2781.58 -17.78
DJ Utility 2714.25 -2.81

Other stock market indexes
FTSE 100 3778.4 -29.8
Tokyo Nikkei average 21662.7 -162.7

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NYSE / AMEX
An Lev 40.82 +1.12
Ami 54.77 +0.31
Amif 54.77 +0.31
Amif 54.77 +0.31

INFLATION MARKETS

Dollar crosses (US)
Pound 1.5214 -0.004
Euro 1.3584 -0.0008

Libor rates
Dollar 3 months 5.5998 0
Dollar 6 months 5.5998 0

Foreign financial data courtesy of CommStock Trading Ltd.

Foreign financial data
Austria 19.12
Belgium 19.12
Canada 19.12

INFLATION MARKETS AND COMMODITIES

US commodities
Cocoa (May) 103.8 +0.15
Coffee (May) 102.8 +0.15

London commodities
Cocoa (May) 103.8 +0.15
Coffee (May) 102.8 +0.15

Spot market metals (US)
Gold 382.95 +0.8
Silver 5.37 +0

New York metal futures
Gold (Jun) 385.7 +0.8
Silver (May) 5.37 +0

London metal futures
Gold (Jun) 385.7 +0.8
Silver (May) 5.37 +0

Copper metal futures
Gold (Jun) 385.7 +0.8
Silver (May) 5.37 +0

Other metal futures
Gold (Jun) 385.7 +0.8
Silver (May) 5.37 +0

Other metal futures
Gold (Jun) 385.7 +0.8
Silver (May) 5.37 +0

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Multi-sided trading

Commercial Banks
Bank Leumi 138.50 0.0
Bank Hapoalim 138.50 0.0
Bank Mizrahi 138.50 0.0

Two-sided trading

Afternoon
Name Price Change % Volume
Bank Leumi 138.50 0.0 0.0

MORNING

Morning
Name Price Change % Volume
Bank Leumi 138.50 0.0 0.0

Investment Companies

Investment Companies
Name Price Change % Volume
Bank Leumi 138.50 0.0 0.0

Property, Building & Agriculture

Property, Building & Agriculture
Name Price Change % Volume
Bank Leumi 138.50 0.0 0.0

Oil Exploration

Oil Exploration
Name Price Change % Volume
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PARALLEL LIST
Name Price Change % Volume
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Amzn 217.75 +0.75
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Tokyo
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Amzn 172.75 +0.75
Msd 127.75 +0.75

Hong Kong
Aapl 172.75 +0.75
Amzn 127.75 +0.75
Msd 82.75 +0.75

Singapore
Aapl 127.75 +0.75
Amzn 82.75 +0.75
Msd 37.75 +0.75

Other international
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Amzn 37.75 +0.75
Msd -2.75 +0.75

Other international
Aapl 37.75 +0.75
Amzn -2.75 +0.75
Msd -7.75 +0.75

Other international
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Amzn -7.75 +0.75
Msd -12.75 +0.75

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Amzn -27.75 +0.75
Msd -32.75 +0.75

Other international
Aapl -27.75 +0.75
Amzn -32.75 +0.75
Msd -37.75 +0.75

Weaker shekel boosts stocks

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

Two-Sided Index 205.91 +0.88%
Maof Index 216.88 +0.96%

STOCKS rose yesterday almost one percent as the shekel weakened further against the US dollar, improving the outlook for profits for exporting companies.

The Two-Sided Index went up 0.86% to 205.91, while the Maof Index rose 0.98% to 216.66.

Research by Zamek Securities shows, for example, that "every 1% devaluation in the shekel means 5% increase" in net income for Makhshishim, the chemicals company, Nahum added.

The most active issue yesterday was Koor Industries Ltd., Israel's largest industrial company, with some three dozen businesses. Its shares added 4% to NIS 9.8m. of shares traded.

Eurobourses end lower after strong US data

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

LONDON (Reuters) - European bourses pared opening gains in afternoon trading to close well down yesterday, as Wall Street slipped on yet another set of strong US economic data.

The Dow Industrial Index fell a quick 40 points on opening as players digested new data putting US economic growth at an unexpectedly rapid 2.8 percent in the first quarter.

Weekly US unemployment claims data out yesterday were also short of expectations, 348,000 against a forecast 368,000, confirming yet again a picture of strong US growth, pushing bond prices down, and yields up to year-highs.

The London Stock Exchange lost all earlier vigor, as British bonds followed US Treasuries and shares took their lead.

The FTSE index slid below the psychologically important 3,800, as American GDP data sparked interest rate fears, knocking shares, bonds and gilts.

Concern ahead of the US employment report today was combined with some caution over local elections, in which the ruling Conservatives were expected to perform poorly.

Genoa shares tumbled on the US news, dragged down by futures. A US Treasury-led decline in German government bonds, or Bunds, sparked the slump.

Interest sends stocks down

WALL STREET REPORT

NEW YORK (AP) - Stocks plunged yesterday, as interest rates soared amid new signs of rapid economic growth that fueled inflation worries on the eve of a pivotal employment report.

Among NYSE issues, 557 rose, 2,012 fell, and 586 were unchanged. Volume totaled 440.0 million shares as of 4 p.m., vs 403.3 million in the previous session.

The Nasdaq composite index fell 20.12 to 1,179.53. The Russell 2000 fell 4.34 to 345.94.

At the American Stock Exchange, the market value index fell 4.81 to 588.97.

CURRENCY CROSS-RATES
MARK STERLING YEN SEK FFY
STERLING 2.257625 158.2567 1.870694 7.728176

Other currency rates
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STERLING 2.257625 158.2567 1.870694 7.728176

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Researchers: Many Ashkenazi women with ovarian cancer carry BRCA1 gene

JERUSALEM researchers have found that almost half of the Ashkenazi women who have contracted ovarian cancer carried the mutated gene BRCA1, which was recently discovered to cause five percent to 12 percent of all breast and ovarian cancers.

An unexpected finding was that the defective gene is also common among women who had no other case of ovarian cancer in their immediate family. BRCA1 has not been found among Sephardi women.

The preliminary findings, released yesterday, were the result of a study of 25 ovarian cancer patients whose genetic makeup was examined at Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Hospital. The interdisciplinary research was conducted by Dr. David Hillela, Prof. Rafi Catane, and Dr. Bella Kaufman, of the hospital's oncology institute; Prof. Uzi Beller, of the oncological and surgical gynecology unit; and Dr. Ephrat Levy-Lahad, of the oncological genetic counseling clinic.

Beller said the finding was "important and very interesting," but that the incidence of the BRCA1

JUDY SIEGEL

gene does not at present justify the testing of all Ashkenazi women.

"There are over 100 mutations linked to the genetically transmitted forms of the diseases," he noted.

If a first-degree relative of a woman with ovarian cancer is found to have the gene, she should consider having her ovaries removed, if she has finished having children and is going into menopause, Levy-Lahad said.

"The ability to detect the gene has another benefit," Beller said. "If we find a woman with ovarian cancer who is not a carrier of the gene, we can calm her in the knowledge that she will not pass it on to her daughters."

The latest discovery "shows us we don't know enough about this part of genetics. We are just at the beginning of the road," Beller added.

Levy-Lahad said the fact that numerous ovarian cancer patients with the gene did not have close relatives who had contracted the illness could be due to a number of possibilities. Women relatives may

have died of it without the exact cause being diagnosed or made known to the family; the mothers, aunts, sisters, and grandmothers died young (a considerable number during the Holocaust), before the ovarian cancer could appear; and the woman had many male relatives who can pass on the gene but not get the cancer themselves.

In addition, she said, "Every gene has a certain amount of resistance, and not everyone with the gene will get the disease, although the majority will."

The study was carried out by examining the genetic makeup of all Shaare Zedek patients who recently developed ovarian cancer; those with a family history of the disease were compared with those did not. The mutation was found among 40% of the Ashkenazi patients who did not know of a similar case of the disease in their family.

The team now intends to test the genetic makeup of all their ovarian cancer patients from Ashkenazi backgrounds, along with their relatives, and to carefully watch those women who carry the gene.

Asher Wallfish, 'Post's' longtime Knesset correspondent, dies at 68

THE last thing that Asher Wallfish, *The Jerusalem Post's* parliamentary correspondent for more than a quarter of a century, told his family was that he wanted to be remembered as an educator and a journalist.

Asher died Wednesday, a month shy of his 68th birthday, of lung cancer. He was buried yesterday at Kibbutz Gvat.

Asher was born in Salford near Manchester, England, on June 10, 1928. He and his four brothers and sisters were raised in an ardently Zionist home. He spoke Hebrew from an early age and was a member of the Habonim youth movement.

In 1948, after receiving a B.A. in Oriental languages from Oxford University, Asher was sent to Marseilles, which had become a staging center for the transport of immigrants from Europe and North Africa to the fledgling Jewish state.

Thirty years later, in a *Jerusalem Post* Independence Day supplement, he described his experiences in the transit camp and summed it up by saying: "Marseilles is where Europe ended and Israel began for me."

He arrived here the following year and was a founding member of Kibbutz Kfar Hanassi in Upper Galilee, where he lived for 12 years. During that time, he served as a youth counselor, spent five years as principal of the local school, and two years as an emissary in Canada and the US. He married Claude on January 16, 1957.

Asher left the kibbutz in 1961 and settled in Jerusalem the following year. After three years in



Asher Wallfish, educator and journalist.

the IDF Censor's Office, he joined the *Post*. In 1967, he was assigned to the Knesset, from which he reported uninterrupted until his retirement in June 1993.

During those years, Asher also reported at various times for the

BBC, the *Daily Mail*, the *Australian*, the *Australian and New Zealand* broadcasting corporations, the *Jewish Chronicle*, and *Newsweek*. In 1973, he won an Overseas Press Club Award for radio news reporting of the Yom

Kippur War. Several months after his retirement, the Knesset gave him a special award for his parliamentary coverage.

I had the pleasure of working with Asher during the last two years of his career in the Knesset. We spent many hours together in a tiny room in the reporters' wing, working at close quarters and from time to time - chatting about work and other matters.

I found him to be blessed with a unique charm - a blend of wisdom, a warm voice, fatherliness, and more than a hint of irony, which always kept his interlocutors amused but slightly off balance - no easy accomplishment when it comes to politicians. With utmost politeness and characteristic understatement, Asher good-naturedly conveyed to the subjects of his reporting that they couldn't pull the wool over his eyes. They liked him for that, and for the civility and accuracy of his writing.

Asher took great pride in the fact that he never revealed his opinions to the MKs, and that politicians from both sides of the spectrum liked and trusted him. It could not have been easy for him, since it was not for the lack of personal opinions that he refrained from expressing them. Yet, in some important way, Asher was probably more comfortable in a reticent role because it enabled him to conceal a sensitivity and vulnerability he had no desire to display.

Asher is survived by his wife Claude, four children - Corie, Talia, Shmaya, and Patrick - and eight grandchildren. Dan Izenberg

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SWISS

(Continued from Page 1)

recently cited as one of the banks that continued to do business with the Nazis after Swiss banking rules barred such dealings.

Although the Swiss are noted for precision timing, the meeting was delayed by some two hours, because the bankers' flight to New York was late.

Efforts to extricate Holocaust-era funds from the banks began in earnest last September with negotiations conducted by the World Jewish Restitution Organization and the Swiss. Since then, the issue has attracted the support of President Bill Clinton and the Congress. The Senate Banking Committee held hearings on April 23, when Basel publicly committed the bankers' association to participate in the committee and cooperate in the audit.

RACING

(Continued from Page 1)

horse races will go to the winners. The rest will be earmarked to support sports, which, though a worthy goal, is less important than education, he added.

Despite these objections, six of the seven MKs present supported the idea in principle.

"I have always supported [legalizing] gambling, because underground gambling is many times more dangerous than gambling which is regulated by law," explained Tichon.

The only one who opposed the idea was Poraz, who said he objected to gambling because it victimizes the weaker elements of society by seducing them into wasting money they cannot afford. He said he believes the poor actually gamble more than the well-do-to, and vigorously opposed allowing horse races without at least conducting a study of what types of people tend to gamble and the socio-economic effects of gambling.

Committee chairman Gedalya Gal (Labor) announced that in his opinion, there would be horse racing here sooner or later, and the only question is when.

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Effective Monday, May 20, 1996, the reception hours of the visa section will be changed. The section will now be open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., Monday through Friday. This change will apply to all those seeking services related to immigrant and non-immigrant visas.

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Yorkshire opens break 66-year-old record

LONDON (Reuters) - Yorkshire opens Maryn Moxon and Michael Vaughan broke a 66-year-old club record by reaching 316 without loss against Glamorgan in Cardiff as the English county cricket championship began yesterday.

Bulls, Knicks headed for Round 2 showdown

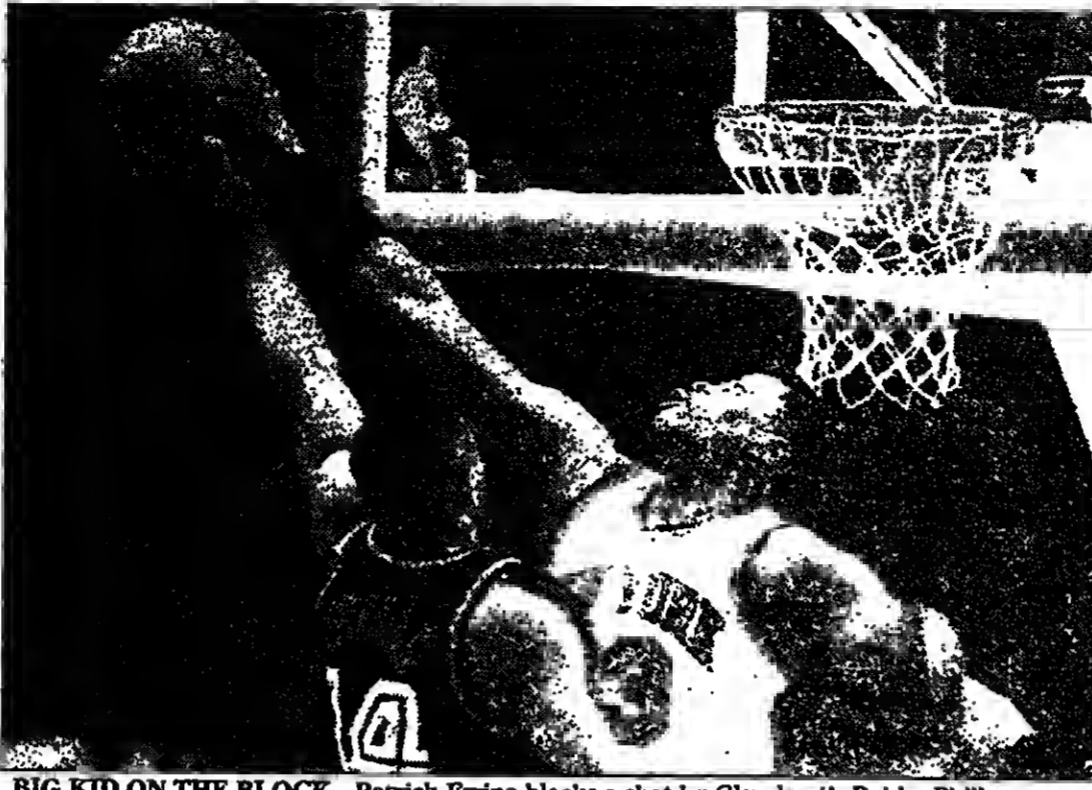
MIAMI (AP) - Michael Jordan, playing in pain, scored 26 points Wednesday night to lead the Chicago Bulls past the Miami Heat 112-91 for a sweep of their first-round playoff series.

Hapoel Jerusalem goes up 2-1

ARYEH DEAN COHEN

HAPOEL Jerusalem Coach Pini Gershon may have pulled a rabbit out of his hat last night, but it was Norris Coleman's return from a first-half disappearing act that led the hosts to their 98-76 rout of Hapoel Galil Elyon.

was going in the second half, with the ball quickly going to Coleman inside, who hit his first basket to start a 7-0 Jerusalem run.



BIG KID ON THE BLOCK - Patrick Ewing blocks a shot by Cleveland's Bobby Phillips. (Reuters)

Starks scored 22 points for New York, while Terrell Brandon had 19 points for Cleveland. Trail Blazers 98, Jazz 90. Phoenix survived two last-second shots by San Antonio to stay alive in their first-round series.

Mac TA ready to secure title again

DEREK FATTAH. WITH just three rounds of the National League season left to play, this weekend's 28th round of soccer action sees leader Maccabi Tel Aviv smack on course to retain its title crown.

A touch of class: Hoddle chosen as England coach

LONDON (Reuters) - Glenn Hoddle, who was appointed as England's youngest ever soccer boss yesterday, has devoted a career to bringing poise and intelligence to the bruising cut and thrust of English soccer.

Jerusalem, Haifa hot in nat'l bowls tourney

NORMAN SPIRO. IN a field day for the underdogs, it was the Jerusalem and Haifa clubs which won the men's triples and pairs respectively in the annual national fives competition.

Crystal Palace fan attacks prosecutor in courtroom after conviction

LONDON (AP) - Crystal Palace fan Matthew Simmons attacked the prosecutor in the courtroom yesterday after being convicted of provoking French star Eric Cantona's kung-fu attack.

Clemens wins first

BOSTON (AP) - Roger Clemens struck out 13 for his first win of the year on Wednesday, sending the Tigers to their 12th loss in 13 games. Yankees 11, Orioles 6 (15).

Table with columns: Division, Team, W, L, Pct., GB. Includes teams like Kalla Petros, Azzak Clemens, Kibutz Gezer, Vision Center, Haasot Benny.

Vertical sidebar with various advertisements and logos, including 'Home ns', '119', '389', '125', '25299', and '770'.

Yigal Amir appeals to Supreme Court

Argues no proof his shots killed Rabin

YIGAL Amir, convicted of the murder of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, yesterday appealed to the Supreme Court, arguing it had not been proven that his shots actually killed Rabin.

Attorneys Gabi Sbarar and Shmuel Fleishman cited the evidence of ballistics expert Baruch Glatstein, who said his laboratory tests of Rabin's clothing showed that the first bullet to hit him was fired from a distance of less than 25 cm., while the second was fired with the gun actually touching his clothing.

Glatstein was particularly emphatic on the latter point, the appeal noted, and said the marks made by the second bullet could only be made by a gun fired while touching the clothing. The bullet which wounded bodyguard Yoram Rubin also might have been fired from almost point-blank range, Glatstein said.

However, the appeal noted, the testimony of all the eyewitnesses, including an amateur videotape of the incident, showed that Amir was never close enough to Rabin to have fired these shots. The appeal also cited several other points to support the theory that someone else had fired the fatal shots.

First, it said, several witnesses testified the gunshot had an odd, distinctive sound, whereas tests

EVELYN GORDON

of Amir's gun showed that its sound was perfectly normal.

Second, Amir told the police immediately after the event that he had put nine bullets in his gun.

Since four bullets were fired at Rabin - the two which hit him, the one which hit Rubin, and one which missed, but was later found at the site - there should have been five bullets left in Amir's gun. However, there were eight.

Third, the appeal cited the unidentified watch and eyeglasses found at the scene of the crime. And finally, several witnesses heard someone call out "Blank!" immediately after the shooting, but this person has never been identified.

Contradicting all this evidence are the ballistics tests which showed the bullets in Rabin's body were fired from Amir's gun.

The appeal, therefore, charged that the bullets may have been tampered with, since, it said, there are no records of what happened to the bullets between the time they were removed from Rabin's body on the night of November 4-5 and the time they were delivered to the Abu Kabir forensics institute at noon on November 5.

Due to all of this, the appeal said, Amir should be acquitted of

murder and instead convicted of attempted murder.

Alternatively, the appeal argued, the charge should be reduced to manslaughter, because Tel Aviv District Court erred in finding that Amir intended to kill Rabin.

Amir claimed that he only intended to paralyze him, and the appeal said this claim is supported by the fact that Amir's motivation for the shooting was the belief that Rabin was a *rodef* - someone who is trying to kill you, and therefore, under Jewish law, can be killed preemptively.

The appeal noted that, according to Jewish law, one tries to disable the *rodef* first, and kills him only if this fails.

The appeal also argued that Amir was psychologically unbalanced, and should therefore be convicted of manslaughter rather than murder.

Finally, the appeal challenged Amir's sentence, which was life for killing Rabin plus six years for wounding Rubin. Even if the murder conviction is upheld, the appeal argued, the six-year sentence for wounding Rubin - the maximum for the crime - is too stiff.

Furthermore, it said, that sentence should be served simultaneously with the life sentence, rather than in addition to it.

Noted author, former MK Emile Habibi dies at 75

DAVID RUDGE

EMILE Habibi, veteran Israeli Arab author and former MK, died yesterday at 75.

Habibi, one of the founding members of the Israeli Communist Party and an MK from 1952-1972, is to be buried in Haifa, his home city, today.

Palestinian poet Mahmud Darwish is expected to among the mourners at the funeral.

Reports said Darwish had entered Israel secretly from Jordan, with the permission of the authorities, to meet Habibi, who died before they could get together.

"For many years, he fought for peace and coexistence," Culture Minister Shulamit Aloni told Israel Radio.

"A day after May 1, the poison of death kidnapped Emile Habibi, a star, a banner who lived and still lives in the conscience of all forces of peace," said Mohammed Naffa, secretary-general of the Israeli Communist Party.

Habibi was awarded the Israel Prize for literature in 1992 and accepted the award, after some hesitation, to the consternation of many Arabs here and abroad.

He had stirred controversy among Jewish politicians and academics two years earlier, when he was presented with the Palestinian "Al-Kuds" award by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in Cairo.

His acceptance of both awards, however, was in keeping with Habibi's consistent belief in peaceful coexistence and a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Habibi left politics in 1972, ostensibly to concentrate on his literary work and editing the Communist Party's newspaper *Al-Itihad*, which he turned into a daily in 1983.

He continued to edit the paper until 1989 when he split with the party following the break-up of the system in the former Soviet Union.

Two years later, he officially resigned from the party and all active political work.

Habibi wrote several books, which brought him recognition throughout the world, especially here and in the Arab countries.

In his most famous novel, *The Op-simist*, which depicts the dilemma of an Israeli Arab, Habibi coined a new word derived from optimism and pessimist.

The book was translated into 12 languages, including Hebrew, and has been staged as a play in both Arabic and Hebrew.

According to reports, his tombstone will bear the inscription, "Emile Habibi remains in Haifa forever."

Ex-GSS informer convicted of spying for Palestinian Authority

MOHAMMED Abdullah, 24, of Tel Aviv, a former General Security Service informer, was convicted of spying for the Palestinian Authority by the Tel Aviv District Court yesterday.

Abdullah, originally from Aja, near Jenin, and an informer between 1989 and 1995, confessed to the crime.

Last year, he approached Palestinian intelligence in Jericho and offered to provide them with information on the GSS that he had gleaned during his work

there. He described his recruitment and activities, and provided the names and other identifying information about his controllers.

He also provided the names of several others he suspected of being informers.

He also agreed to serve as a double agent, and returned to Israel to carry out the tasks assigned him, including the murder of another suspected informer.

The court set his sentencing bearing for May 28. (Itim)



Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert congratulates pupils of the city's Zalman Aran School, which won a flag-making contest based on the theme 'Jerusalem - a healthy city' to mark World Health Day.

Police raid Jerusalem casinos

JERUSALEM police and Income Tax Authority and VAT investigators arrested eight owners and employees of illegal casinos in Jerusalem last night. They confiscated roulette wheels and slot machines worth hundreds of thousands of shekels.

The raid was the result of an investigation which had lasted several months, during which undercover policemen patronized the casinos.

Police said they have information about other casinos and additional raids are planned.

The police found that the casinos, which had been operating in stores in Mahane Yehuda, the city center, and Har Habotzvim for more than a year, took in tens of thousands of shekels each night.

Several of the eight detainees, one a minor, were known to the police.

One dealer had been arrested in a previous raid.

Police also detained several gamblers, who told of significant losses that had depleted their bank accounts and forced them to sell their homes. (Itim)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Jerusalem pupils demand radon-free building
Hundreds of pupils from the Mamlachi Bet elementary school in East Talpiot and their parents protested outside Jerusalem City Hall yesterday demanding the school be moved to another building. Two weeks ago, dangerously high levels of radon were found in the school building and, at the beginning of this week, parents called a strike, refusing to allow their children into the building. The school had been closed for three weeks in December and January because dangerously high levels of radon were detected. (Itim)

US denies polling Israeli voters
A spokesman for the US Embassy yesterday denied an Israeli newspaper story regarding a United States Information Agency poll of Israeli voters. The story claimed a USIA poll showed a one percent margin between Shimon Peres and Benjamin Netanyahu. "The story lacks all basis in fact," spokesman Richard Scorza said. "Neither the USIA or the embassy possesses any such poll." (Jerusalem Post Staff)

Returning Israeli charged with smuggling cocaine
Ya'acov Ohanona, 44, was charged with smuggling 38 kilograms of cocaine into the country by Tel Aviv District Court yesterday. The cocaine was found hidden in a shipment that Ohanona, a resident of Moshav Kadima who had been living in New York, had sent here with his rights as a returning resident. The shipment arrived at Haifa Port in March. (Itim)

Nigeria denies training Hizbullah
The Nigerian Embassy released the following statement yesterday: "Pursuant to a publication in a Nigerian newspaper, quoting alleged Israeli sources, and the Israel Radio broadcast about the presence of a Hizbullah unit in Nigeria, Nigerian Ambassador Ignatius Oisemeka met with Eitan Bentsur, senior deputy-director-general of the Foreign Ministry. "Oisemeka categorically stated that Nigeria has no Hizbullah or any foreign training bases on its territory. Bentsur expressed the Israeli government's concern over the worldwide activities of Hizbullah." (Jerusalem Post Staff)

AROUND THE WORLD

City	Low	High	Forecast
Amsterdam	10	12	cloudy
Berlin	10	12	cloudy
Bombay	24	28	clear
Calcutta	28	32	clear
Chicago	15	18	cloudy
Copenhagen	8	10	cloudy
Helsinki	10	12	rain
London	8	10	cloudy
Lyons	10	12	cloudy
Madrid	12	15	cloudy
Moscow	8	10	cloudy
New York	15	18	cloudy
Paris	10	12	cloudy
Prague	10	12	cloudy
Stockholm	8	10	cloudy

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